The role of the NZIMLS Council. “What we do” and “What can you do for us”

Ken Beechey, Ross Hewett

“What does the Council do for us?” would be a common and reasonable question from the membership. Much like the hidden work of our profession to the public it is probably not until you are elected on to Council, attend meetings and deal with the regular correspondence that the full extent of Council’s involvement in serving our members and profession is realised.

Typically Council meets four times per annum – late November, in March before the South Island Seminar, during May before the North Island Seminar and in August preceding the Annual General Meeting (AGM). Following the AGM, the elected Council members are allocated portfolios (see below) that they are responsible for during the following 12 months, responding to enquiries fielded though the Executive Office and reporting back to Council at meetings.

The aim of this Editorial is to provide a brief insight into some of the functions of Council along with examples of our recent work. Opportunities on how the membership can become actively involved and help are also proffered under each section.

Regional representation

Your five regional representatives network with contacts in each laboratory across their region reporting back to Council on local issues, concerns and items of interest. In recent years the Council representatives have endeavoured to improve communications back to their members through local newsletters post-Council meetings.

Take time to find out who your local regional representative is and relay any issues to them regarding professional affairs. Council can only represent the members on the information and feedback received relating to our profession.

Financial governance

The funding of the NZIMLS comes from the membership and their employers. The NZIMLS has employees and sub-contractors who manage the day to day business of the organisation. It is the responsibility of Council to ensure the proper use of these funds and to ensure, as a good employer, security of employees and manage the financial liabilities of all conferences and seminars. Without sufficient financial resources the NZIMLS would be unable to function and fulfil the needs of the membership.

Professional affairs

The NZIMLS has regular contact with other professional bodies (including MLSB, Universities, DHBNZ, MOH, PPTC, AIMS) throughout the year on issues such as qualifications and examination requirements, also course developments. Council is often requested to offer nominations and submissions to various Ministry of Health committees on issues, plus work relating to Clinical Scientists and the workforce.

Promoting the profession is another primary function of Council with annual involvement in career expos across the country.

Offer to participate in career expos in your area.

CPD

The CPD program run through the NZIMLS is one of three approved by the Medical Laboratory Science Board. Co-ordinated by Jillian Broadbent, designated Council members assist in the consideration of members’ enquiries on CPD point allocation and the programme in general.

Prepare questions for the on line classroom - obtain CPD points for yourself and help provide another avenue for your colleagues to also gain CPD points.

Examinations

The NZIMLS provides QMLT/QSST and Fellowship examinations. Although the good work in setting, marking and moderating examination papers are provided by our volunteer members, Council members work hard in the background with the Executive Office to assure the process is run in a timely manner and help audit the papers prior to being distributed to examiners.

Over the past few years Council has worked on standardising the syllabi and examination papers, providing log books for all disciplines and clarifying the guidelines for examiners and moderators. This, along with improved training opportunities for examiners and moderators, has led to a greater consistency in examination questions and standards.

Your continued input and feedback on syllabi content, logbooks and exams are fundamental to continued improvement to our professional examinations. Consider becoming an examiner or moderator.

Scientific meetings and seminars

The Annual Scientific Meeting, Special Interest Groups and the North and South Island Seminars are all run under the auspices of the NZIMLS. A recent review and additions to the SIG Guidelines for running these events have been developed as an aid for the SIG convenors whilst also providing consistency and financial prudency.

These meetings cease to exist without papers and participation from our members. The success of the scientific content therefore lies within.

Help the continued success of our meetings by forward planning to offer presentations or posters to the SIG and conference convenors when asked. Also feedback to Council is welcomed on suggestions for good presenters (local and international) or topics for meetings.

Communications

The NZIMLS continuously works on improving communications to its membership through the NZIMLS website, Journal and regular newsletters.

Write an article for the Journal.
**Feedback on the refreshed new look website and content.**

**Sponsorship/awards**
The NZIMLS offers the Barrie Edwards and Rod Kennedy Scholarships for which all applications are judged by designated members.
The Hugh Bloore Poster prize is also awarded at the Annual Scientific Meeting.

**Apply for these awards and reap the financial benefits to help attend a scientific meeting.**

**Membership**
Advice and clarification on membership issues are also processed through Council.

**Encourage your colleagues to become members.**

**Council**
It is a rewarding task to serve on Council which covers a multitude of functions to promote the profession and to provide ongoing education and qualifications for its membership. It is always an important reminder that “you the members” are the NZIMLS and it is only by your continued support and input that will we continue to grow and raise the profile of our profession.

**Communicate with Council through your regional representative, the Executive Office or Council member. Consider standing for Council and put something back into your profession.**

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**NZIMLS Council Members**
Top row from left to right: Tony Barnett (Region 4 rep), Kim Allan (Region 3 rep), Chris Pickett (Vice President), Jan Bird (Region 2 rep), Ross Hewett (Secretary/Treasurer).
Bottom row: Rob Siebers (Journal Editor), Terry Taylor (Region 5 rep), Margie Matson (Region 1 rep), Ken Beechey (President), Jillian Broadbent (CPD Coordinator) Absent: Fran van Til (Executive Officer)

**NZIMLS Council portfolios 2010-2011**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Role</th>
<th>Participants</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>CPD</td>
<td>Jillian Broadbent / Chris Pickett / Ken Beechey</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ASM</td>
<td>Fran van Til / Ross Hewett</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professional Affairs</td>
<td>Ken Beechey / Chris Pickett</td>
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<tr>
<td>SIG Governance</td>
<td>Ross Hewett / Fran van Til</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>QMLT/QSST/QDT</td>
<td>Kim Allan, Tony Barnett</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Newsletter</td>
<td>Margie Matson / Sharon Tozer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Promotion/Communication</td>
<td>Terry Taylor / Executive Office</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marketing</td>
<td>Fran van Til / Ross Hewett</td>
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**Careers Expos**
Wellington – Kim Allan
Auckland – Margie Matson
Christchurch – Ken Beechey + Some local volunteers
Hamilton – Chris Pickett / Jan Bird
Dunedin – Terry Taylor

**Board of Studies**
AUT – Margie Matson
Massey – Kim Allan
Otago – Terry Taylor

**Membership**
Jan Bird / Sharon Tozer

**Classroom**
Biochemistry – Margie Matson
Microbiology – Tony Barnett
Haematology – Ken Beechey
Immunology – Terry Taylor
Histology – Jillian Broadbent

**Website**
Chris Kendrick / Fran van Til

**Documentation**
Fran van Til / Sharon Tozer

**MLSB Liaison**
Ken Beechey, Fran van Til and Sharon Tozer

**Fellowship**
Rob Siebers, Ann Thornton and Jillian Broadbent.

**Finance**
Ross Hewett, Sharon Tozer

**Journal**
Rob Siebers

**NZIMLS Governance**
Ross Hewett / Ken Beechey / Chris Pickett

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